



Stability and Connection Planning

What is Stability and Connection Planning?

Communities plans with parents, and anyone else important to them and their child, what needs to happen to make it safe enough for children to return home while planning for the child's best interests when they are in out-of-home care.

Stability and Connection Planning allows Communities and the family to plan the steps needed and work together for the child to go home but also to make sure there is a plan for the child if they can't go home.



Make sure everyone is clear on the plan to make it safe enough for the child to go home and how long this will take.

What needs to happen to make it safe enough for the child to go home.



Who will help the child understand what is happening and find out what they want?

Stability and Connection Planning

Who will help the child know about their family, community, country and culture?

Keep the child connected to people who love and care for them even if they can't go home.



You might hear us say “parallel planning”

What is that?

Parallel planning means that we need to work on two plans at the same time:

Primary Plan: Our main plan is to help the family make the changes needed for it to be safe enough so the child can return home.

Secondary Plan: This is our back up plan. If the child can not go home because it is not safe enough, we need to plan so that they have somewhere stable to live and can continue to connect with the people important to them.

What do I need to do during Stability and Connection Planning?

30 day family meeting: You and the people who love and care about your child, should go to a family meeting within 30 days of them coming into care. At this meeting the primary and secondary plan will be talked about. We should talk about how long it will take for this to happen if everyone does what they say they will do. The trajectory will be given to the Children’s Court.

Monthly review meetings: At least every month after that, you should attend a meeting with Communities and anyone who loves and cares for you and your child. At this meeting everyone continues to work towards making it safe enough for the child to go home. We also plan to make sure your child know about their family, community, country and culture. Everyone will be asked how they think the plan is going.

How long do we have to do Stability and Connection Planning?

Communities should make a decision about whether a child can safely return to their parents’ care within:

Twelve (12 months) for children who enter protection and care at less than three (3) years of age and;

Two (2 years) for all other children and young people.

What if I do not agree with the decision?

Communities will make a decision about whether the parents have made the changes needed for it to be safe enough for the child to return home. After making this decision, the monthly meetings should continue until the Children’s Court have made a decision about what is in the child’s best interests. Even if you do not agree with the decision, you should still meet with us to show the court that you are still working on the plan to make it safe enough for your child to go home.

The Department of Communities – Child Protection and Family Support division (Communities) works under the *Children and Community Services Act (2004)*. When Communities is working with families the aim is to support parents, families and communities to keep children safe at home. If the decision is made for a child to come into care, the aim is to keep children with their extended families where possible and if not living with their family, the child to stay connected to family, community, country and culture.

You can find more information about the Children and Community Services Act, online at www.legislation.wa.gov.au